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ABSTRACT

This monograph reflects some of the current thinking about inservice teacher education, with a particular focus on the role of inservice education in improving reading instruction. Chapter one, an introduction to inservice education, attempts to deal with the problems involved in implementing inservice programs as well as to establish the need for them. Chapter two discusses the process of inservice planning and implementation. The topics covered range from the identification of legitimate needs for inservice education, through the steps of implementation, to the evaluation of the efforts expended. Staff roles and responsibilities are dealt with in chapter three. Formats for inservice sessions (e.g., lecture, demonstration, observation, interviewing, brainstorming, role playing, and buzz sessions) are presented in chapter four, and strengthsand limitations of each are considered. Some descriptions of inservice programs that have already been implemented are given in chapter five. (WR)

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FOREWORD

Inservice education programs have eroded during recent years for a multitude of reasons. An easily observable reason has been the steadily decreasing budgets available for these activities, particularly since the decline of NDEA funding.

However, one may logically argue that the reduction or elimination of inservice education budgets is symptomatic rather than causative. The budgets of school districts abound with items which are included because teachers and teacher organizations lobbied successfully to place them there. The attendance at educational conferences – local, state, regional, national, and international – attest to teachers' interests in increasing their knowledge and improving their skills.

Is it possible that a major cause of the decline of inservice programs, or staff development activities, has been that teachers have not been receiving the assistance they feel they need?

The authors of *Inservice Education to Improve Reading Instruction* represent university and public school points of view. Recognizing that the principal function of an inservice education activity is to effect an increase in teacher effectiveness, Otto and Erickson present a rationale, describe the process, identify the roles of individuals, list a variety of formats, and outline effective ongoing programs of many types.

This publication will provide a resource for teachers and administrators as they cooperatively design inservice programs which will help each one to more effectively fulfill his role in the educational scheme.

Millard H. Black, *President*
International Reading Association
1973-1974

PREFACE

The concept of inservice education has been with us for a long time, probably because the limitations inherent in the preservice education of teachers have long been recognized. The bad news is that inservice programs have tended to be unsystematic, poorly focused, and largely ineffectual. There are many reasons for this poor showing, but perhaps the main ones are lack of adequate budgetary support for inservice efforts and lack of a comprehensive scheme for planning and implementing sensible inservice programs. The good news is that substantial funds are beginning to be made available for inservice efforts and much more attention is being paid to developing a coherent conceptual framework for guiding inservice efforts.

Our main purpose in this monograph, then, is to attempt to reflect some of the current thinking about inservice education, with a particular focus on the role of inservice education in improving reading instruction. In keeping with the spirit of the *Reading Aids Series,* the book is addressed to teachers and other school personnel who work directly with teachers in attempting to improve reading instruction.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to inservice education. In a sense, the chapter may amount to a locker room pep talk – everybody knows what the game is about, but the coach wants to get everybody really turned on before the play begins. But in a more pragmatic way Chapter 1 is an attempt to deal realistically with the problems involved in implementing inservice programs as well as to establish the need for inservice.

In Chapter 2 we consider the process of inservice planning and implementation. The topics covered range from the identification of legitimate needs for inservice work, through the essential steps of implementation, to the evaluation of the efforts expended. Taken together the topics amount to a framework for planning and guiding a well-focused inservice program.

Staff roles and responsibilities are dealt with in Chapter 3. Good inservice programs are the result of careful planning at all levels of the school establishment and their success depends heavily upon the degree of commitment and involvement of the personnel involved.

Formats for inservice sessions are presented in Chapter 4 and the strengths and limitations of each are considered. In the past, inservice programs have tended to take stereotyped formats, with much talking to teachers and relatively little effort made to seek the involvement of the participants. Alternatives are given in Chapter 4.

Finally, some examples of inservice programs that have actually been implemented are given in Chapter 5. The examples are offered as descriptions of real programs, not as models for anyone else. The reader is invited to examine each example critically and to determine where improvements and adaptations could profitably be made. We hope the information provided in the first four chapters will make such an exercise both possible and worthwhile.

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Chapter 1

INSERVICE EDUCATION

In view of reasoned estimates that as many as one-third of the school children in the United States do not read well enough to meet the demands of school and society, it does not seem necessary to present a lengthy justification for inservice education to improve reading instruction. While there is no doubt that schools have successfully taught millions of children to read, the fact remains that the need for upgrading and improving the teaching of reading continues. This need is recognized at the national level, and it is gratifying to see that efforts to cope with the problem are being directed toward improving public school programs. The focus is mainly on the students and educators within the education system. Such a focus amounts to a challenge that can be met most adequately by inservice education in the local schools.

• Who Needs Inservice?

In order to effect significant improvements in the teaching of reading all of the instructional staff including teachers, principals, central office personnel, and other support staff must be involved in inservice efforts. The need for a broad base of involvement was recognized by one midwestern school district which included inservice work in reading in the 1972 contract negotiated by the board of education and the teachers. The agreement contained a section which called for all teachers and principals to take part in some type of intensive inservice reading program. The agreement stipulated that the programs would be coordinated by the central office reading consultants and designed to fit the specific needs of each elementary, middle, and high school. Placing the central office reading consultants' expertise in full view of the teachers and administrators for an extended time enhances the credibility of the consultants and helps insure their future involvement in the local school setting. Also, the leadership and influence crucial to securing financial commitment and changed procedures was assured by including principals in the program.

• Where Should Inservice Take Place?

In 1968, Harold Howe, then United States Commissioner of Education, told a group of elementary principals that their schools should become teacher training institutions in the fullest sense (*2*).

> The school itself has many of the necessary components for taking on the teacher training responsibility . . . it offers a more practical setting than the college . . . a pupil population, a principal, direct contacts with parents, and a community environment.

Significant improvements in reading instruction will occur when the inservice training is given in the school where the instruction of students takes place. Inservice education should take full advantage of the daily school environment as an ideal teacher training institution; this potential has not been fully realized.

Focusing attention on inservice education to improve reading instruction at the individual school level may be one of the more productive ways of organizing inservice education because it permits the involvement and interaction of pupils, teachers, administrators, consultants, and parents to take place where the concern is – in the classroom. Yet this is not to say that the only place successful inservice education in reading can occur is in each local school. Certainly different purposes and needs dictate different settings. The key concept is not only *where* the reading inservice takes place, but also *who* is involved: inservice programs should be planned and carried out to maximize staff involvement and increase commitment to improved reading instruction.

Maximizing staff involvement and increasing commitment to improved reading instruction is no easy task. There are forces which exist in school organizations which tend to counteract the process of educational change. Therefore, before dealing with the concepts of *involvement* and commitment to change through inservice education, a brief look at the process of educational change is desirable in order to answer the question, Why is there a tendency for schools to resist change?

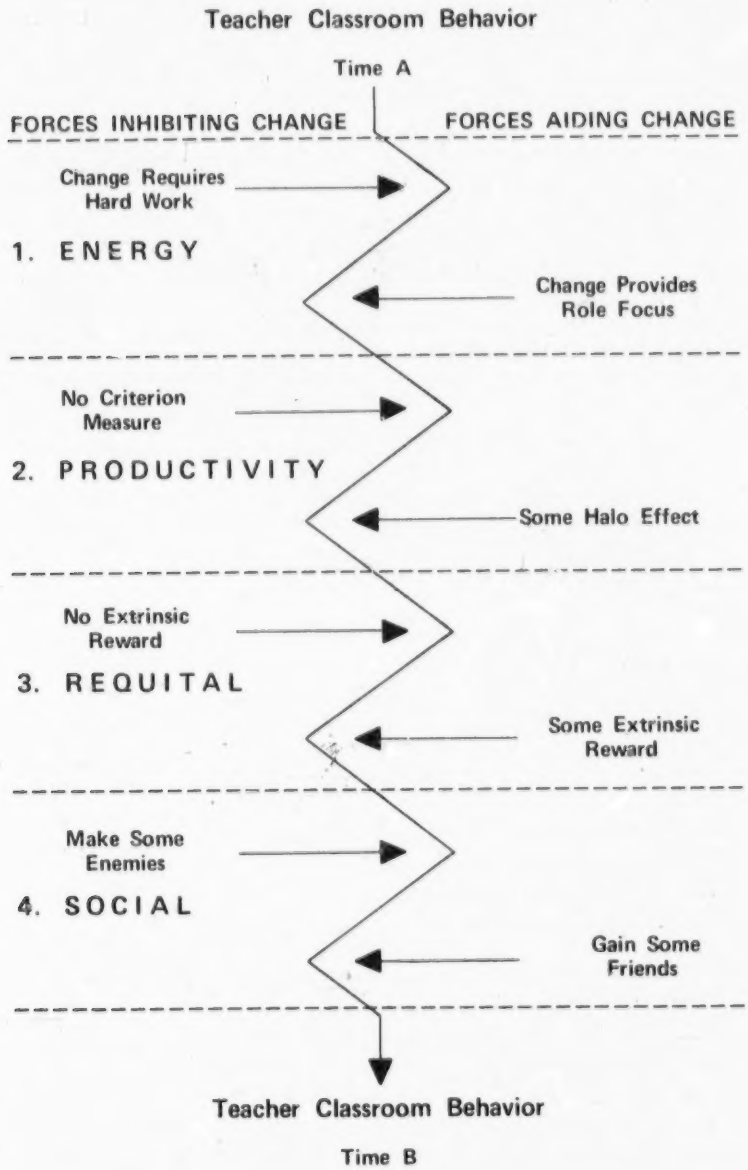
• Change is Difficult

Given that *involvement* is a powerful force which facilitates changes in the behavior of school personnel, other forces exist within school organizations which work for and against change. Persons charged with the responsibility for planning and carrying out inservice programs in reading with the hope of changing procedures and individual behavior should consider these factors in order to maximize the chances for improved instruction and to minimize blind adherence to past practice. At the risk of oversimplifying the complex array of such forces which exist in schools, an illustration is given in the brief discussion that follows.

One theoretical view from educational administration which looks at the forces for and against change in schools is provided by James Lipham at the University of Wisconsin. His model analyzes the dynamics of curriculum change by showing how teacher behavior is affected by four different pressures. The model presented in Figure 1 is an attempt to portray graphically how these pressures inhibit and aid changes in teachers' classroom behavior.

The model seems to explain why inservice programs run the risk of changing teacher behavior very little. Ignoring the inhibiting forces dooms the chances for changed behavior. With the model as a guide, inservice plans may include some extrinsic rewards to counteract the hard work required. Or, released time may be imperative to allow teachers to bring fresh energy to the inservice task. A social activity may balance the fact that better teaching procedures, while hoped for, cannot be guaranteed. The *halo effect* from mass media publicity may also help overcome a lack of productivity or extrinsic rewards.

Figure 1. Dynamics of Curriculum Change



The Lipham model indicates that inservice education programs must attempt to maximize the forces which will enhance change and minimize the forces which inhibit change. This is no easy matter since the forces which work against change appear much more potent than the forces which may facilitate changed behavior.

• Need for Involvement and Commitment

We have already made the point that inservice programs should be planned and carried out to maximize staff involvement and to increase commitment to improved reading instruction. The importance of involvement and commitment is apparent when the forces which inhibit change are considered. Proper involvement of the participants may be the key to successful planned change in the schools, and significant improvements in reading instruction probably will occur only when change in individual administrative or teaching behavior occurs.

Most planned changes in schools are of an impersonal type, like purchasing new reading materials. Too few inservice reading programs stimulate change in personal behavior because this type of change requires active involvement and a commitment to improvement by the participants. When inservice programs engage the participants in activities which will affect later behavior the chances for improved reading instruction will increase.

In order for activities to affect later behavior they must have some impact on an individual. Harris and Bessent (*1*) present an excellent analysis of this concept by illustrating the experience impact of activities as in Figure 2. These several activities are presented to show the way in which they are ordered according to their experience impact.

Figure 2. Experience Impact of Activities

ACTIVITIES	Control of Content	Multisensory	Two-way Communication
Lecture	x		
Illustrated Lecture	x	x	
Demonstration		x	
Observation		x	
Interviewing	x		x
Brainstorming	x		x
Group Discussions	x		x
Buzz Sessions	x		x
Role-playing	x	x	x
Guided Practice	x	x	x

Low Experience Impact ▲ ▼ High Experience Impact

The three column heads in Figure 2 are the variables which appear to control the experience impact of activities. For example, if the partici-

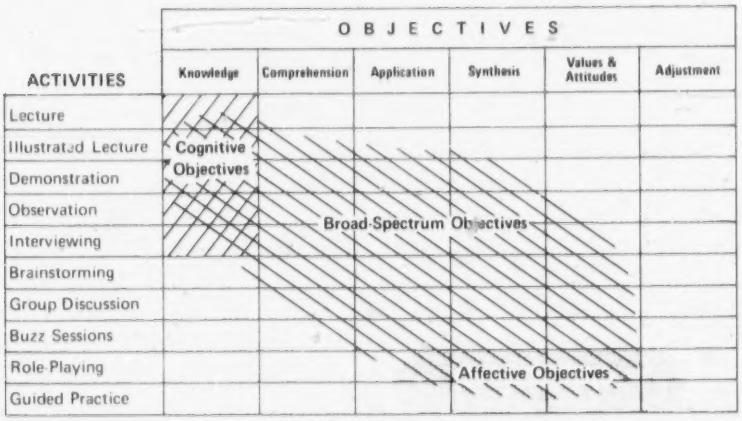
pants have some control over the content of the activity it may have more relevance for their needs; or, if the activity involves multisensory presentations, involvement is enhanced. Finally, if two-way communication is prevalent the chances for feedback and interaction increase the degree of experience impact.

For example, a lecture urging teachers to be more diagnostic in their teaching of reading will not involve them as much as an activity in which they actually diagnose reading behaviors and teach students using the diagnostic information. A film or demonstration of a reading specialist administering an informal reading inventory will not involve teachers or principals as much as their actually doing an informal diagnosis with a student.

The concept of experience impact suggests that some activities are better for certain reading inservice purposes than others.

In the case of a program which is supposed to introduce new reading materials to teachers an appropriate activity may be an illustrated lecture or a demonstration. An inservice session which is aimed at promoting an understanding of different views of teaching reading would wisely choose buzz session activities where the maximum emphasis is on interaction and a full opportunity to express ideas. Assuming that specific objectives have been determined for the inservice program (see Chapter 3), the task of relating activities to these objectives becomes a question of personnel, time, facilities, equipment, materials, and, of course, cost. Again, Harris and Bessent (1) offer a useful inservice design grid (Figure 3) which shows how inservice activities might be chosen in order to reach the desired objectives.

Figure 3. Inservice Design Grid



Note that in Figure 3 inservice programs in reading range from the cognitive objective type (the primary concern is learning about programed reading), to the broad spectrum type (the goal is to demonstrate the limits

of reducing the reading ability ranges through homogeneous grouping), to the affective type (the intent is to determine the effect of ability grouping on student attitudes toward reading). By carefully analyzing the impact of activities and relating activities to objectives, inservice programs in reading can more systematically establish the degree of involvement necessary to obtain the desired outcomes.

• The Payoff

Considering the complex forces which tend to inhibit improvements and the conditions and actions which appear necessary to facilitate changes, the task of improving reading instruction demands considerable expertise, hard work, ideal conditions, and a little bit of luck! Indeed, one is tempted to ask, is it worth it?

In terms of possible payoff, inservice efforts to improve reading instruction appear to be well worth the effort. In fact, among all of the alternatives available, inservice programs appear to offer the best chance for change.

The following are some of the significant results which can be expected from inservice efforts:

1. An inservice program can unify and motivate educators to work toward common goals. Too often teachers work alone receiving little stimulating feedback. The opportunity for teachers and administrators to air viewpoints can have electrifying results which may result in the identification of common interests. These areas of concern can become the nucleus of worthwhile inservice programs.
2. An inservice program can help schools to develop total reading programs in which teachers become aware of a broader sequence of reading skills. Knowing where they fit into the scheme clarifies their role and permits them to individualize instruction on a continuum rather than to conceptualize their reading program as having a definite starting and ending point for all students.
3. An inservice program can clarify problems and suggest solutions. Often problems in teaching reading can appear overwhelming and no alternatives or solutions are apparent. This condition creates low morale, lack of motivation, and a poor learning environment. Inservice programs can reduce problems into manageable packages and offer alternative solutions. When failure is defined as a lack of alternatives schools cannot ignore efforts which produce possible solutions to improving reading instruction.
4. Inservice programs can introduce and implement new ideas and procedures. New practices need to be tested, ideas modified, and well-known, proven practices continued. Inservice programs are needed to insure that reading instruction is maintained in a lively, dynamic state.
5. Inservice programs can improve accountability procedures by enabling teachers to specifically diagnose individual student needs and prescribe activities to individuals or small groups of students with common needs.
6. Inservice programs which involve parents and others from the community can increase public support for education. Providing people

outside the schools with a better understanding of the reading process, and demonstrating the variety of teaching strategies necessary in order to try to teach all children to read, can increase public support for schools.

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1. Harris, B. W., and W. Bessent. *Inservice Education: A Guide to Better Practice.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
2. Howe, H. *Picking up the Options.* Washington, D. C.: Department of Elementary School Principals, NEA, 1968.
3. Lipham, J. M. "Dynamics of Curriculum Change," unpolished manuscript, Department of Education Administration, University of Wisconsin, 1972.

Chapter 2

PROCESS

Let's face it. While most teachers would agree that inservice education is needed, they would also agree that their inservice experiences have been poor. The reason inservice tends to be dull or useless is that often the sessions are poorly timed, too general, or too specifically devoted to administrative housekeeping. Before we examine the process of designing well focused inservice programs, consider some of the mistakes that are made.

Harris and Bessent (*1*) identified three areas in which serious mistakes are often made when inservice programs are planned and executed. A discussion of these areas follows.

1. *Failure to relate inservice program plans to genuine needs of staff participants.* Practice often violates the common sense expectation that inservice efforts should focus on the needs of teachers and other staff. Inservice programs dictated by the school board or by the administration almost always miss the target group for whom they are intended. Programs based on superficial surveys ostensibly reflecting teacher interests are likely to be of little real value. Even when true interests are identified, programs are more often designed for uniform presentation than to meet individual differences – yet differences among teachers are at least as great as differences among students. Finally, seldom is careful evaluation undertaken to determine the degree to which needs are met and/or the extent to which other needs have been identified as a result of the program.

2. *Failure to select appropriate activities for implementing program plans.* Again, practice often violates the common sense observation that adults (just like children) learn best when activities are diverse and paced according to participants' progress, and when there is enough flexibility to respond to individual needs. Too often inservice activities take stereotyped forms – lecture followed by discussion, film followed by buzz session, a series of topical meetings – with no real consideration for the unique purposes which given activities serve most effectively.

3. *Failure to implement inservice program activities with sufficient staff and other resources to assure effectiveness.* Harris and Bessent (*1*) had it all together when they said ". . . it is fundamental that one does not get something for nothing. Inservice education involves costs in terms of time and money for staff, materials, and facilities." The point is that after-school sessions of an hour or less never have and never will amount to an adequate vehicle for inservice. Staff members must be freed for a few hours, a day, a week, a month, or a year to engage in worthwhile tasks once they have been identified. Inservice leadership must be assumed or assigned and given high priority status. Budgets must provide for adequate released time, resource people, and materials.

Once mistakes have been recognized, corrective steps can be taken. To correct the mistakes we must 1) identify pressing inservice needs, 2) establish appropriate goals, 3) set specific objectives, 4) select activities and schedule sessions in view of the goals and objectives, and 5) evaluate the results obtained. The remaining pages of this chapter consider in detail each of these important aspects of the process of inservice education.

• Identify Needs

The first step toward meaningful, worthwhile inservice activity is the identification of needs of teachers and other staff members. Bypassing this step is like attempting to build a house without providing first for a proper foundation. The identification of significant needs is no simple matter, and specific procedures will vary from one situation to another. Inservice programs should never be planned without the active participation of those who will be the participants and, hopefully, the benefactors – superficial surveys of interest will not suffice. Leadership must be provided to stimulate interest and to assist teachers and staff in systematically seeking out and recognizing needs.

One example of an approach to the identification of inservice needs was reported by Smith, Otto, and Harty (*4*). They went directly to a sample of 308 classroom teachers in order to discover the teachers' 1) attitudes toward the preservice preparation for teaching reading that they had received, 2) perceptions regarding personal needs for additional information, and 3) preferences for certain approaches to inservice education. The teachers responded to four main questions:

1. How well do you feel your preservice education prepared you to teach reading in your first regular teaching assignment? (Response choices ranged from *Very Adequately* to *Very Inadequately* on a 5-point scale.)
2. Please rank order the following in terms of when you feel instruction in reading is most valuable to elementary teachers.
   - ___ before the student teaching experience
   - ___ during the student teaching experience
   - ___ after the student teaching experience, but before beginning the first regular teaching assignment
   - ___ after beginning the first regular teaching assignment
3. Check the specific areas of reading instruction about which you currently feel a need for information.
   - ___ grouping students
   - ___ diagnosing individual instructional needs
   - ___ using basal materials
   - ___ using supplementary materials
   - ___ different methods for teaching reading (ITA, programed)
   - ___ developing word attack skills
   - ___ developing comprehension skills
   - ___ providing for the disabled reader in the classroom
   - ___ differentiating instruction for different groups

___ providing for the superior reader

___ using the library or IMC

___ using writing, speaking, and listening in reading instruction

4. Please rank order the following according to your preference for the ways in which inservice education may be presented.
   - Television programs produced and presented by personnel in your school system.
   - Television programs produced and presented by personnel who are not regular employees in your school system.
   - Films or video tapes viewed by teachers individually or by the staff of one school.
   - Classes offered for professional improvement (but no university credit) for any interested elementary teachers in the system.
   - Classes offered for professional improvement (but no university credit) for teachers of specified grades.
   - One to one conferences with a reading specialist at your request and in your own school.
   - Presentations by a reading specialist at one or more staff meetings at your school during the school year.
   - Classes or workshops offered at a nearby university for university credit either during the regular school year or the summer session.

The approach taken by Smith, Otto, and Harty (*4*) could be adapted for use in a variety of situations. Whatever the specifics, a questionnaire designed to identify teachers' interests and needs related to inservice should 1) pay attention to attitudes toward certain alternatives, 2) offer an array of concrete choices of topics rather than open ended response type items, and 3) seek some input regarding preferences for the types of presentations that could be made available.

Perhaps the main point to be made here is that the identification of needs deserves at least as much attention as any other aspect of the process of designing and carrying out good inservice programs. The process begins with the identification of need; the remainder of this discussion is based on the assumption that this first step has been taken. These needs are frequently observed:

Elementary school teachers need help in selecting new instructional materials.

Teachers need assistance in devising more efficient ways of grouping pupils for instruction.

The entire staff of a school building needs input regarding the details of implementing a new instructional program.

Secondary teachers need to become acquainted with specifics of an all-school approach to reading instruction and what each one can do about the teaching of reading.

Leadership is essential to identify needs and careful planning is required to meet them. The next step is to establish realistic goals and objectives.

• Establish Goals and Objectives

The main drawback in most inservice efforts is that not enough attention is paid to outcomes. That is, activities are initiated and carried out but nobody worries much about results in terms of improved instruction, more positive attitudes, or other measurable outcomes. But without attention to outcomes, inservice efforts will remain ineffectual.

The identification of needs gives direction to longterm efforts by suggesting a goal or goals. In order to make progress toward the goal, one must have more specific objectives to guide the activities that will lead to attainment of the goal. As Harris and Bessent (*1*) have pointed out, the activity appears frequently to be confused with the objective: "It is not unusual to find an inservice program in which the only identifiable objective is to have an inservice program." A vague notion that somehow an inservice program will result in good is as fallacious as believing that a gulp of cod liver oil is good for you.

Worthwhile objectives are stated in behavioral, or performance, terms. In other words, the objectives are stated in terms that describe what a participant should be able to do upon completion of the program. Such objectives not only provide help in the selection of learning activities, but also guide attempts to evaluate whether an objective has been reached. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to contrast some objectives that are stated in behavioral terms with some that are not.

Not Stated in Behavioral Terms	*Stated in Behavioral Terms*
To understand the philosophies that underlie different approaches to phonics instruction	To contrast analytic with synthetic approaches to phonics instruction
To know how to interpret check lists in the evaluation of materials	To identify or devise checklists to be used in evaluating materials
To understand the function of readability formulas in the preparation of materials for reading instruction	To apply readability formulas to selections from basal readers

The behaviorally stated objectives specify observable acts. ***Preparing Instructional Objectives*** (*3*) is a good source for more discussion; it has become the how-to-do-it bible on behavioral objectives. Mager provides the definitive statement on the function of behavioral objectives. He said it all in the last verse of a short poem that introduces a later book of his, *Developing Attitude toward Learning* (*2*):

> To rise from a zero
> To Big Campus Hero,
> To answer these questions you'll strive:
> Where am I going,
> How shall I get there, and
> How will I know I've arrived?

And so it is with objectives that are stated in behavioral or performance terms – in order to state them, we must decide exactly where it is that we want to go; having decided that, we can devise effective ways to get there; and having done our thing, we can check back to see how well we did.

Behavioral objectives permit us to set specific goals, plan activities, and evaluate our efforts.

Needs, goals, objectives, and activities come together because one proceeds from the other. The sequence thus far looks like this:

1. An inservice need is identified.
2. The need is translated into a goal for a complete inservice program.
3. The goal is broken into more specific behavioral objectives.
4. Each objective serves to clarify activities that are appropriate for reaching the objective.

• Select Activities

When the time comes to plan inservice sessions, objectives stated in behavioral terms help to clarify the activities that will be most appropriate for reaching not only the specific objectives but also the ultimate goal. Activities must be selected in view of resources available and characteristics of the participants as well as the objectives. There would be no point in planning a series of lectures or demonstrations by distinguished researchers and teachers without a budget adequate to pay expenses and honoraria. Nor would there be any point in providing basic information to teachers whose level of sophistication is much higher. Early in the planning sequence two kinds of data must be collected and considered: a cost analysis of the proposed activities and the existing level of knowledge of the proposed participants.

With these cautions in mind, let us consider again the needs → goals → objectives → activities sequence. By using examples from the earlier discussion we can show how objectives serve to focus inservice planning.

1. Identify a *need. Elementary school teachers need help in selecting new instructional materials.* Such a need could be identified through the use of a questionnaire similar to that described by Smith, Otto, and Harty.
2. Set a *goal.* This need is a common one; it is also so broad that it could cover an endless series of sessions ranging from diagnosis to child development to library science. Such a series would burden the budget, exhaust the resources, and try the patience of the participants. Therefore, a goal must be set that is realistic in terms of resources required and of the specific needs of the participants. The latter can best be determined by surveying their interests through more specific questioning and by assessing their existing knowledge through formal and/or informal pretesting.

   Once the finer focusing has been done, a somewhat restricted but attainable goal might be stated as follows: *To improve teachers' ability to apply objective criteria in selecting materials for reading instruction.* With such a goal, it becomes possible to state objectives that lead to the goal in a reasonably direct way.
3. State *objectives.* Even with the more restricted goal it would be possible to come up with an extensive array of related objectives. Again, the specific objectives that are finally identified should give consideration to the resources available, the total time available, the

existing knowledge of the participants and, of course, the ultimate, or terminal, goal.

The examples of objectives stated in behavioral terms that we gave earlier are all related to the present goal:

- To contrast analytic with synthetic approaches to phonics instruction.
- To identify or devise checklists to be used in evaluating materials.
- To apply readability formulas to selections from basal readers.

Note that each of the three examples has to do with quite different aspects of the total process of selecting instructional materials, yet each is relevant to the overall goal. In effect, the objectives serve to define the goal.

4. Select *activities.* In Chapter 1 we named and briefly characterized a number of types of activities that can be useful in pursuing objectives: lecture, demonstration, observation, interviewing, brainstorming, group discussion, buzz sessions, role-playing, and guided practice. Each activity is discussed in some detail in Chapter 4. Because we are at this point in the middle of a total presentation that moves from the general to the specific, we shall simply suggest types of activities for each of the three objectives in our example. After you have had a chance to read the next chapter, come back to this exercise and see if you would make any changes. Give particular attention to any relevant local conditions you may be aware of.

   Objective. To contrast analytic and synthetic approaches to phonics instruction.

   Activities. A modest amount of lecture-type input might be appropriate to define the terms. This could be combined with or replaced by a demonstration in which differences in the two approaches are shown. Group discussion of advantages and disadvantages of each approach in different situations and with different pupils could follow.

   Objective. To identify or devise checklists to be used in evaluating materials.

   Activities. A certain amount of input regarding the scope and content of such checklists might be desirable to start, followed by group discussion and/or working time to lay out a useable checklist. The payoff would come with the application of the checklist in evaluating material.

   Objective. To apply readability formulas to selections from basal readers.

   Activities. The types of activities could be very similar to those for the preceding objective.

By following the sequence outlined here you can move from the identification of a need to the specification of activities designed to meet the need. At the same time, the realities of the local situation must be considered. This is what can make inservice efforts workable and, perhaps even more important, palatable to the participants and vital to the improvement of reading instruction.

• Schedule Sessions

The matter of scheduling inservice sessions may seem a bit mundane after a discussion of needs, goals, and objectives, but the fact is that scheduling usually turns out to be an important factor in the success of the program. Too often the nature of the program is dictated by the time available. Otherwise well planned inservice programs are slap-dashed into the day or two before school starts – when most teachers would prefer to be getting their rooms and their thoughts ready for the arrival of the children. Or they are tacked onto busy school days when the thoughts of even the most conscientious teachers are on other things – rest and rehabilitation being very prominent among them. If inservice programs are worth careful planning, they are also worth the time required for implementation.

The specifics of scheduling depend on such things as the availability of local budgetary support, negotiated contracts, the availability of relevant resources, and the flexibility of the local organization. But whatever the constraints, inservice plans should include the provision of released time and/or paid (or contracted) supplementary time for participation in the inservice activities. If only limited time can be made available, then the activities must be limited to fit the time. No sensible newscaster would attempt to fit thirty minutes of news into a fifteen-minute time slot; no intelligent inservice planner should attempt to jam twenty hours of work into two or three one-hour sessions.

Some school systems provide a number of *inservice days* throughout the school year. The children are dismissed and the day is available for whatever work needs to be done. The idea is sound and the plan is workable so long as the days do not become catch-alls for administrative tasks or deteriorate to grab bag sessions where a variety of speakers are brought in to amuse, delight, and inspire the assembled throng. Some schools provide for released time during the school day to enable committees and work groups to assemble and get about their business. Released time can also make possible visits to other schools or facilities where worthwhile and relevant programs are in operation. Again, planning is required if the released time program is not to deteriorate into happy times in the teachers' lounge or junketing to far off exotic places. Time can also be made available during the summer break. This is especially desirable because relatively long, uninterrupted blocks can be scheduled and collaborative programs can more readily be worked out with nearby colleges and universities.

Remember that work always expands to fill the available time. Therefore, it is not very sensible to make the time available and then try to figure out what to do. Tackle it the other way around: figure out what needs to be done and how to do it, and then schedule the time that is needed.

• Evaluate Results

The main point that we have been making is that inservice programs ought to be built upon demonstrated needs. We have suggested that the best way to get started is to establish goals, and then to state objectives and identify activities that will insure movement toward the goal. But the payoff finally comes when the objectives are attained and the goal is

reached. So the last, but not least important, step in the process is to evaluate results. Without evaluation there can be no assurance that inservice efforts are effective. And, in this age of accountability, without evaluation there can be no accounting for the expenditure of time and money required for worthwhile inservice programs. So, eventually, evaluation is the name of the game.

Fortunately, objectives that are stated in behavioral terms greatly facilitate evaluation. Just as they help to identify appropriate, well focused activities, objectives can serve as the criterion referents when it comes to assessing the impact of the activities. That is, each activity can be evaluated in terms of the objectives that served to set it up in the first place. For example, take an objective we considered earlier: To identify or devise checklists to be used in evaluating materials. Assessment of sessions devoted to such an objective becomes a relatively simple, straightforward matter of observing the output from the sessions. Other, more content-dependent objectives might call for paper and pencil testing to determine whether basic facts and/or concepts have been mastered.

Once an objective sets a criterion referent, evaluation can be done in a number of ways. Observation of the outcomes is the most naturalistic, and perhaps paper and pencil testing is most objective. But work samples (the checklists devised in the activities just discussed) and performance tests (seeing to it that the checklists are actually used properly) can also be used.

When inservice sessions are evaluated in terms of their contribution to an objective, decisions can be made regarding the specific activities employed and their contribution to progress toward the overall goal. Perhaps additional input will be required in order to meet a given objective, or a different type of activity may seem more appropriate after careful evaluation of a session. On the other hand, experience may suggest that the objective itself or the ultimate goal ought to be modified. Objectives and goals ought not to be considered if experience shows that they are unrealistic in terms of expectations and/or available resources.

• Summary

We have specified five steps in the *process* of inservice education. The five steps and the basic function that must be performed at each step are summarized in the schema that follows.

IDENTIFY NEEDS
See what the problems are.

↘ SET A GOAL
Tackle a specific problem.

↘ STATE OBJECTIVES
Define your goal in specific terms.

↘ SELECT ACTIVITIES
Consider cost, resources, and participants.

↘ EVALUATE RESULTS
Check to see that your objectives and, ultimately, your goal are reached.

References

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Chapter 3

IMPLEMENTATION

In Chapter 2 an overall description of the inservice process was presented. In this chapter a more detailed discussion of comprehensive preplanning and of roles and responsibilities is offered to provide somewhat more specific guidelines for inservice leaders.

• Comprehensive Preplanning

It is imperative to look at all of the components in an educational organization which must be adjusted to provide support for altering an existing reading program or implementing a new or different one.

For example, significant changes in reading instruction, such as implementing an objective-based skill grouping procedure, may take two or three years and require a changed organizational pattern. An inservice effort which ignores the time element and the organizational change will doom the venture to failure. Some components which often need alteration to accommodate changes are: grading and reporting practices, planning time, physical facilities, personnel allocations, differentiated staffing, and (of course) money. Other components that are crucial to educational change but may be lacking are the encouragement, stimulation, and morale building forces which can sustain personnel during conflict induced by change. These components, if overlooked, are usually very clearly identified in the teachers' lounge. Therefore, planners of inservice programs, whether they are teachers, administrators, reading specialists, or consultants from outside, have a responsibility to consider all of the components which may need to be adjusted to allow change to occur. This means that those involved in planning inservice programs in reading should "... include someone who is influential enough in the organization to bring about needed changes ..." (*1*). A checklist may be useful to help determine whether all the important elements have been considered. Such a list may include the following:

1. Demonstrate the Need

   Have provisions been made to evaluate present practice?

   What are the major concerns of the teachers regarding the present reading program and what are their suggestions for improvement?

2. Gather Data

   Are there existing policies and procedures which conflict with the objectives of the inservice program?

   Is there evidence available in the form of research results or personal testimony that the proposed changes will be productive?

3. Consider Personnel

   Will there be a preplanning session, prior to the inservice program, with key reading people, supervisory staff, and administrators?

   Is there a key person selected to coordinate the program? Lead inservice instruction? Act as a local consultant?

   Has a target population been determined?

   Is there a need for social activities following workshop sessions?

4. Determine a Budget

   Have provisions for funding been made to cover inservice pay to participants, consultant fees, cost of materials, facility rental, equipment purchase and maintenance, and clerical supplies?

5. Plan a Time Line

   Have definite dates been established and are facilities available for the program?

   Has adequate time been allowed for implementing the new procedures?

6. Expand Communication

   Have communications made people within and outside the organization aware of how the changes will affect their responsibilities?

7. Check Facilities

   Will remodeling of facilities, new facilities, and/or new furnishings be required?

These questions are only a few of the possible items which a comprehensive list might include. Local needs will dictate more specific concerns to be considered by persons responsible for planning and carrying out inservice education to improve reading instruction.

• Roles and Responsibilities

Who initiates inservice programs? Who is responsible for planning activities? Because so much depends upon the purposes of the program, the resources available, and the needs and abilities of the participants themselves no specific descriptions of the roles of the participants can be stated. Nevertheless, general statements can be presented about the rights and responsibilities of teachers and the leadership roles of principals, superintendents, instructional supervisors, consultants from outside the system, and reading consultants within the system. The descriptions of various roles which follow are neither complete nor mutually exclusive. Overlap is the rule rather than the exception.

Teachers

Because teachers are responsible to administrative hierarchy in school organizations, and because many inservice reading programs represent

attempts to change teacher behavior in some way, both the rights and responsibilities of teachers must be considered. This means that the teacher not only has a role to play, but also has the right to expect basic considerations from the school officials who expect a change in behavior. In fact, changed teacher behavior may be facilitated by changed administrator or supervisor behavior. Also, changes in teacher behavior will probably occur only when their own expectancies for change are seriously dealt with in the inservice effort. Some examples of role expectancies include:

1. Teachers must have adequate chance to voice their feelings about changes and innovations.
2. Teachers have a right to expect inservice leaders to plan carefully considering factors of time, energy, reward, and social needs.
3. Teachers have a right to expect administrative or supervisory behavior to change in proportion to the change expected from teachers, provided that changes in both roles are warranted.

On the other hand, teachers have many responsibilities in an inservice program. Teachers should:

1. Communicate to the program leaders their real concerns about reading, including specific proposals as to what the inservice program should accomplish and the kinds of activities that are needed.
2. Participate actively in planning inservice programs when opportunities for active involvement are offered.
3. Prepare in advance for meetings when such preparation is necessary to insure full benefit from the program.
4. Approach inservice programs expecting to gain new ideas that may help teach reading more effectively.
5. Cooperate with other teachers and program leaders in trying out new ideas before accepting or rejecting possible new practices.
6. Evaluate both existing practices and new ideas in a continuing attempt to improve reading instruction.

Principal

In most school systems the principal is responsible for the reading program in a given school building. This responsibility entails knowledge of what constitutes an effective reading program; it includes the ability to provide competent supervision; and it implies that the principal has more than a superficial knowledge of the skills to be taught, the sequence from level to level, the ways which teachers can diagnose and adjust individual differences, and the effectiveness of the total program.

The principal who accepts this responsibility takes the following actions:

1. He builds a background of understanding about what constitutes a good reading program for his school and, if weaknesses in his knowledge exist, he seeks to increase his understanding of reading.
2. He initiates action to improve the reading program in his school when such action is necessary.

3. He utilizes his authority and organizational expertise to involve the appropriate reading personnel, to arrange for substitutes, released time, materials, and an entire host of components necessary for productive inservice programing.
4. He takes an active part in the program and gives evidence that, when necessary, he is committed to changing his administrative/supervisory behavior.
5. He encourages teachers to express their opinions and he respects their opinions; and while he involves teachers in selecting materials and methods for teaching reading, he also offers his own knowledge and opinions when decisions must be made.

Superintendent

As the most influential educational leader in the school district the superintendent's leadership in improving reading instruction is crucial. His interest, involvement, and commitment to inservice education in reading is directly related to the quality of the school district reading program. In this regard the superintendent should accept or specifically delegate these responsibilities:

1. He should provide an accountability arrangement consisting of written policies which charge specific personnel with specific responsibilities for the district reading program.
2. He is responsible for selecting a qualified, adequate number of staff who will carry out the reading program.
3. He is responsible for insuring that budgeted funds are available to support continuing reading inservice programs.
4. He should communicate his interest in improved reading instruction and listen to teachers, principals, and reading inservice personnel.
5. He should support worthwhile proposals by allowing inservice activities during the school day, by participating when possible, by reviewing research, and by suggesting further inservice study.

Supervisor

Many school districts employ instructional supervisors who are expected to give teachers help not only in reading but in all areas of the elementary and secondary curriculum. In many instances so much is expected of these general consultants that they cannot possibly meet all of the expectations held for them by their publics. Fortunately, many instructional supervisors, through intensive self-improvement and enrollment in graduate courses in reading, have developed a good background of knowledge in the area of reading and are in an excellent position to assume leadership roles in reading improvement programs.

The general supervisor who takes an active part in reading inservice programs has many important responsibilities:

1. He develops knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a good reading program as well as the methods and materials that are necessary to carry out such a program.

2. He acts as a liaison between the superintendent and the individual schools involved in the inservice program, attempting to keep the superintendent as actively involved as possible.
3. He tactfully helps principals and teachers recognize the need for inservice activity in reading by pinpointing areas of need using the results of valid surveys and valid tests.
4. He becomes actively involved in inservice reading programs by effectively demonstrating methods and materials, by encouraging and aiding teachers to assume inservice leadership roles, by securing materials on reading for inservice participants, and by arranging for consultants from outside the system when such expertise is needed.

In addition, the general instructional supervisor in systems not employing a reading consultant may be called on to assume specific and far ranging responsibilities in the area of reading instruction. This calls for an obligation on his part to recognize his weaknesses as well as his strengths in reading. By attempting to give help when his background is limited, he may do more harm than good. The best action when this situation arises is to know whom to call for help.

Consultants from Outside the System

Consultants from outside the school system can make valuable contributions to inservice programs provided they meet the specific needs of the particular program. To invite an "expert" for the sake of having a well-known authority may be a waste of everyone's time. Before an "outsider" is invited definite reasons for choosing an individual should be established. Advance planning should pinpoint the specific goals, possible activities, and tentative follow-up plans for the consultant.

As a general rule consultants from outside the system should not be invited unless they do their thing more effectively than someone within the system. For instance, most consultants cannot function as group leaders as effectively as can local persons familiar with local problems. This general rule has to be weighed against the proposition that change is aided by pressures from outside the system; that is, suggestions from outsiders sometimes carry more weight than suggestions from familiar faces. If a consultant is deemed necessary, and a knowledgeable person who can work well with teachers is available, then an invitation to participate requires that the consultant

1. Insist on knowing what the participants want him to do and how this activity fits into the total inservice design.
2. Refuse to accept an invitation when he feels that he cannot effectively do what is requested of him.
3. Refuse an invitation when he feels that local inservice leaders will not prepare the groundwork for his presentation and will not plan for systematic follow up.
4. Insist on meeting with school inservice leaders to discuss the program prior to his direct involvement.
5. Learn as much as possible about the present practice of reading

instruction in the schools prior to presenting his portion of the program.

6. Prepare and present his activity in a manner consistent with the purposes of the program.

The Reading Consultant

The position of reading consultant is fast becoming recognized as a necessary component of the school district reading program. The duties vary from district to district, with some consultants testing and teaching children with reading disabilities while others work strictly with administrators and teachers. Because specific responsibilities vary from position to position the consultant's role can be described best by looking at those functions which relate directly to inservice activities. These functions include acting as observer, resource person, leader, and catalyst.

Observer. Reading consultants must regularly spend a portion of their time directly observing reading instruction. Anyone who has left the classroom for a length of time realizes how quickly one loses the ability to empathize with children and teachers. Indeed, a reading consultant is seriously handicapped without direct contact with the classroom reading program. Discussing daily successes and failures with teachers and principals is one of his most important functions.

The responsibility can best be met by spending extended periods of time, like one or two weeks, in one school. Visitations must be worked out with the principal and staff beforehand. With careful preplanning the reading consultant can communicate effectively with the staff by visiting classrooms (preferably by invitation), examining and evaluating materials, testing children, and conferring with teachers individually and in groups.

This extended exposure to and interaction with the teachers and principals will enhance the credibility of the reading consultant in the role of resource person, leader, and catalyst.

Resource person. The reading consultant is most valuable when involved with the selection of reading materials for classroom use. Because the consultant usually has a great deal of expertise regarding instructional materials in reading, administrators should count heavily on their accommodations. Bypassing the consultant or ignoring his expert opinion can be a serious administrative oversight.

In order for the consultant to know instructional materials he must have access to a wide range of materials. He must also have the authority to introduce new materials to teachers as well as the ability to shift materials from school to school. New materials can stimulate and support improved reading instruction. Involving teachers in evaluating and trying out new materials is one way to stimulate change.

A more personal and possibly the most important role of the consultant is responding to the needs of individuals and groups of teachers who are seeking help. Being available when needed means that the consultant must be organized and free from petty paper work. Being able to come when needed and providing useful solutions to urgent teacher or school needs enhances credibility and allows the reading consultant to function as a true inservice leader.

Leader. The reading consultant can and should be a leader in developing

professional and public understanding of the reading process and reading instruction.

In developing professional understandings, the consultant must take some initiative in bringing ideas to the teachers. This can best be done by spending time in classrooms with teachers and principals. The rapport which may develop through the sharing of classroom concerns can enable the consultant to suggest changes in a tactful, nonthreatening manner.

In another role the consultant can increase understanding by acting as a bridge between the administration and the classroom when philosophies and policies regarding reading instruction are formulated.

Catalyst. Ideally, the reading consultant should have a relationship with teachers and administrators which allows him to challenge them to try different materials and techniques in a search for improved reading instruction. These attempts must not amount to change for change's sake alone but to honest efforts to meet needs as they are recognized and defined.

Reference

1. Harris, B. W., and W. Bessent. *Inservice Education: A Guide to Better Practice.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969, 41.

Chapter 4

INSERVICE FORMATS

In any successful inservice reading program the marriage between the specific goals and objectives and the actual activity engaged in by the participants will determine, to a great extent, the success or failure of the program. Thelen (*2*) points out that activities in themselves are neither good nor bad; they can be used effectively or disastrously. An activity which is supposedly a surefire "group dynamics" technique can fail miserably. A buzz session with nothing to talk about is embarrassing, a panel of reading experts whose expertise is not relevant to the needs of the teachers is maddening, and role playing at the wrong time with the wrong participants can be ghastly. Thelen warns that cautious selection is called for when inservice activities are planned and offers these questions as guidelines for matching activities with objectives:

1. What main objective is the activity supposed to accomplish?
2. Under what conditions does the activity actually work successfully?
3. What undesirable things does the activity produce?
4. What part of the activity is fixed and what can be modified to fit a particular situation?

In this chapter some of the formats, or basic activities of inservice programs, are described and briefly analyzed. The intent is to present a good selection of basic activities which will serve as a resource for inservice leaders. While the descriptions and analyses of the various activities are brief, this should not be interpreted to infer that activities can be matched hastily with an objective to automatically produce a successful inservice effort. Careful attention must be paid to subtle differences in activities. Each activity is not necessarily an inservice format in itself; a series of similar activities or a combination of different activities carefully put together can result in a program which not only reaches specific objectives but also satisfies the variety of different purposes which are apparent in the usual school inservice effort.

The basic activities discussed in this chapter include: lectures, demonstrations, observations, interviews, brainstorming, buzz sessions, group discussions, and role playing. Each brief discussion of the activity contains a definition and description of the format, its intent, some procedures and limitations, and an example. The interviewing, brainstorming, buzz sessions, group discussion, and role playing portions are adapted from *Inservice Education, A Guide to Better Practice* (*1*). We urge inservice leaders to refer to this useful text for more explicit information.

• Lecture

Probably the most used and most misused inservice activity is the arrangement where one person speaks to an audience. This activity is an

excellent vehicle for providing one way, controlled input of information and is probably used in some form in almost every inservice program. In terms of experience impact it is relatively low on the scale because the learner is usually passive, the content is controlled by the speaker, and perception is limited to listening, although visual aids such as charts, slides, overhead transparencies, and filmstrips can improve listener comprehension.

The chief value of the lecture is that it is an efficient, straightforward, and simple way to arrange for inservice participants to receive specific information such as basic facts, definitions of terms, or a framework from which to move to higher order objectives.

The lecture format may be the most used and most misused activity simply because too much is expected from it. If the objective of an inservice program is to change values and attitudes or to change instructional techniques, calling upon the most dynamic speaker of outstanding authority may begin but will not complete the process of change. This does not mean that lectures should be abandoned. The point is, if the specific objective calls for a controlled input of information to commence, sustain, or summarize a portion of a program, the lecture is a sound activity.

In Chapter 5 a number of examples of inservice reading programs call for an input of basic information. In one example, a lecture would be appropriate for defining the terms and presenting examples of analytic and synthetic approaches to phonics instruction. In another session, aimed at identifying or devising checklists to be used in evaluating reading materials, a most appropriate activity is a brief lecture which presents the scope and sequence of such lists. Or, in a program showing teachers how to apply readability formulas to selections from basal readers, a lecture containing an overview of a number of formulas as well as their uses and limitations would be desirable.

• Demonstration

In this basic activity the participants usually witness a real or simulated teaching activity in a setting which usually includes procedures, materials, equipment, and techniques employed in the "real world."

Demonstrations have relatively low experience impact because the content is tightly controlled, the observer is generally passive, and, unless immediate follow-up activities are included, communication is most often one way.

The purpose of a demonstration is essentially to move beyond factual information to portray an active process being carried out. Demonstrations provide teachers with models of specific behavior and help answer specific questions such as "what do you do if . . . ?" The specificity necessary for a worthwhile demonstration calls for a relatively narrow topic. This point was well made by Harris and Bessent when they listed the following ten steps which stress the need for narrow demonstration activity goals and tight planning.

1. Expect one demonstration to cover only a limited purpose. Plan separate demonstrations when a number of purposes are intended.
2. Select a demonstrator who has considerable skill and knowledge

of the specifics being presented.

3. If possible, stage a practice with a few observers to suggest refinements.
4. Prepare a detailed demonstration plan which includes a time schedule and follow-up activities.
5. Prepare a packet of materials for the participants to use before, during, or after the demonstration. The packet should include an agenda, background information, resources, and a writing activity which encourages note taking.
6. Maximize visual presentations and use listening as a supporting element. Generous explanations should be avoided and used only if natural to the situation.
7. If possible, limit the participants to only those who are interested, or have an expressed or diagnosed need. Also, use status persons like principals, supervisors, and department heads to assist in follow-up activities.
8. Avoid lengthy introductions and move into the demonstration quickly, saving explanations and discussion for the follow-up session *after* the demonstration.
9. Take advantage of immediate interest by having follow-up activities while impressions are still clear. Use the demonstrator in the follow up but have someone else take the major responsibility.
10. Allow maximum viewing and listening for the observers and minimize technical difficulties for the demonstrator by selecting an appropriate staging area properly equipped for the session.

While both tight planning and specificity may increase the clarity of the presentation they also create the most serious limitation of a demonstration activity. Because teachers realize that many reasonable alternatives exist in the real world there is a tendency for them to reject modeling behavior. For example, a demonstration which attempts to show how a teacher-student conference can motivate a child to read more library books runs the risk of rejection on the basis of "that isn't what I would say." To counterbalance this tendency immediate feedback in the follow-up activity should be planned to allow teachers to vent their reactions. Another possibility which may increase teacher acceptance is to limit demonstrations to situations where specific skills are to be copied, such as learning how to administer a standardized reading test or operate a specific audiovisual device.

In summary, three points to remember are: 1) while detailed planning and a dry run are useful steps, try to avoid overstaging the demonstration – keep the behavior spontaneous and natural; 2) demonstrations can realistically be expected to provide information and understanding but don't expect them to result in skill development; and 3) try to see the demonstration from the observers' viewpoint and always include a follow-up activity which permits observers to review the purposes and check out their perceptions of what they have witnessed.

• Observation

Observations provide participants with opportunities to view teaching activities in actual classroom situations. The rationale for this activity is simply, "Let's see how they do it!"

Observations, like lectures and demonstrations, have relatively low experience impact because there is no control over the content other than the original selection of the observable activity. Also, if the observation is in the typical classroom there is usually little chance for communication between the observers or between the teacher and the observers. A few schools have one-way observation windows including sound systems which solve the problem of interruptions and allow observers to share comments. But in the vast majority of schools the observer is cautioned to be passive, and communication is most often one way unless time arrangements, previous planning, or the activity allow the observers to ask questions.

Due to the unpredictability of the everyday classroom and the usually unavoidable lack of detailed planning between the visitors and the school, the content of the observation is not as focused as it is in a demonstration. Therefore, one-shot observations must be limited to rather general objectives. A better plan, although not usually operational for groups of teachers, would be to observe a specific skill lesson over a period of time (like one week).

Because observations are limited in experience impact, somewhat unpredictable in content, and often too brief to afford complete understanding, they are probably overused in the name of inservice activity. For example, the faculty that rents a bus and drives to see the model reading program in the next county will undoubtedly have a good time. But the fact of the matter is that little change in teacher behavior will occur as a direct result of the visit.

On the other hand, if there was a need to observe a different reading program, and if the observers were prepared in advance to seek definite ideas, and if they were prepared to return and act on what they had seen, the experience may stimulate change or answer practical questions.

The following guidelines for deciding, arranging, and carrying out observations are based on actual experience and indicate the need for careful planning in order to obtain maximum impact from observing actual classroom instruction.

Guidelines for Observers

1. Decide what specific activities must be seen to meet the objectives of the inservice program.
2. Investigate several possible places and select the situation which will best fit your stated objectives.
3. Communicate with the proper administrator well in advance of the proposed visit.
4. When inquiring about the proposed observation tell the purpose of the visit and specifically describe the type of activity you wish to observe.
5. To help in your preobservation preparation ask for a witness description of the program. Also try to obtain information such as the location of the school, the names of the administrator and teachers, the room numbers, and a specific time schedule.
6. At the school, check in at the office before looking for the specific location of the observation, and inquire about the rules of observing.
7. Always try to arrange a time to talk to the teacher about what you

observed. Observations almost always raise many questions which should be answered in order to clarify perceptions.

8. If possible, try to take notes to facilitate remembering the key points you wish to consider when you are back home.
9. When you return, carry out follow-up activities while impressions are fresh and interest is high. Try to answer the question, "What are the implications for our instructional program?"

Note: Although the following guidelines represent a change in viewpoint they are offered with the intent of improving observation as an inservice activity.

Guidelines for Schools that Receive Observers

1. If visitors continually (every week) request permission to observe specific activities, set aside a specific time for observations. Teachers will know what to expect, there will be less interruption, numbers of people can be controlled, and there will be smoother overall administration.
2. Prepare a brief visitor data sheet which states the goals of the program, general student information, and instructions regarding interruptions.
3. Determine a specific advance notification period. A good practice which teachers appreciate is notification on Friday of the visitors for the coming week.
4. When a request is received determine the specific intent of the visit and pass this information to the teacher.
5. Refuse to allow mass visitation to pass for inservice education. Ask what the intent is and if they have planned a follow-up activity.
6. Because observations have a limited usefulness in the first place, reserve the right to turn down requests. A good rule of thumb is simply that the students' and teachers' needs have precedence over the visitors' needs.

In summary, if observations are to achieve their stated intent, they require detailed planning prior to the visit to coordinate the needs of the observers with the actual instruction observed. Specific follow-up activities are imperative to determine what, if any, implications there are for changing reading instruction.

• Interviewing

Two basic activities are included in the following discussion. First, the *personal interview* or individual conference is examined in terms of its implications for changing teacher behavior; and second, the *group interview* is presented as an efficient method of communicating a wide variety of ideas to large groups of inservice participants.

Personal Interview

This person-to-person interaction activity is basic to education and consumes a large quantity of working hours for many educators. Usually the objective of this activity in terms of inservice education is to exchange

information with another person in order to effect changes in either one or both persons' behavior. For example, the principal may wish to give a teacher some information about her performance. The intent is that the teacher will understand her own performance better, accept the principal's viewpoints and, if necessary, change future behavior. Of course, whether or not behavior changes occur is dependent upon many factors, one of which is the role of the interviewer. Harris and Bessent (*1*) deal extensively and quite sensibly with the personal interview. They point out how the outcomes of an interview are controlled in part by the following three examples of interviewer behavior. In these examples, as in most school situations, the interviewer is the principal or supervisor and the other participant is the teacher.

Directive, critical. The interviewer (principal or supervisor) is the expert and knows what the problems are. He not only tells the teacher what is wrong but he also gives specific instructions on how to improve. The problem is faced squarely with no compliments offered and if the teacher resists, threats are used to indicate the serious need for change.

Laissez-faire. The principal/supervisor is easy going and wants to seek a solution without causing difficulty. A cordial relationship is intended and compliments and positive comments flow. A problem is implied and the supervisor assures the teacher "I have faith that you will do a good job."

Nondirective, constructive. The principal/supervisor approaches the interview as a counselor. He acknowledges the problem but seeks clarification and asks for suggested solutions. He offers assistance but clearly indicates that the teacher is responsible for taking the initiative.

Of course participants react quite differently to these three interview situations and different persons may react in different ways to the same interview. But extensive experience with the three modes has indicated that in terms of improving instruction, the following generalizations can be made.

1. If a principal or supervisor desires a positive response toward improvement the critical and laissez-faire approaches are often less effective than the nondirective.
2. When negative side effects can be tolerated the critical approach may be effective in obtaining acceptance of suggestions.
3. The nondirective critical approach gives the supervisor/principal insight into the teacher's perception of the problem and may allow him to be truly helpful.
4. The direct, critical approach puts the principal or supervisor in a role of expert and tends to rule out the use of other resources.
5. The laissez-faire approach may build false confidence on the part of the teacher and will not provide any suggestions for improvement.

Because the interview or conference appears to be a technique which offers some predictable outcomes, supervisors and principals should keep in mind that no one type of superordinate behavior is bad or undesirable under all conditions. Rather, it is obvious that there will be times when any one of the three approaches is appropriate, and in fact necessary. Too often, little thought is given to the mode of the conference and the necessary outcome. Most often the tendency is to keep peace and harmony when the need for change far outweighs the side effects of a direct, critical approach. Also there is a tendency for people to have only one style.

Ideally used, the interview activity should vary according to the advantages and disadvantages of each style in a given situation. By giving more thought to the need for changed behavior and less thought to the need for harmonious personal relationships, the interview activity can be an effective format for improving reading instruction.

Group Interview

This activity consists of a situation where one person interviews several others. The intent is not to change personal behavior; rather this format is appropriate in problem solving meetings because it allows several resource people to respond to the same concern in a structured manner.

Usually the interviewer has a list of questions developed by the inservice participants and each expert responds to the same question. Thelen (2) points out that the panel should be told to respond only with ideas that have not already been given. An example of a group interview is a report on the results of a number of buzz group sessions. Each buzz group sends a reporter to be interviewed in front of all the participants. Another example is to examine a proposed reading program by interviewing a panel of selected people who are thoroughly familiar and competent with respect to the program under consideration.

In summary, the personal interview is an efficient way to attempt to bring about changes in specific behavior. The interviewer matches his approach with the desired outcome. Group interviews appear to be an efficient technique for sharing expert opinion or small group ideas with a larger audiences.

• Brainstorming

While inservice programs can make use of brainstorming sessions to stimulate ideas, inform people of other ideas, suggest alternative solutions, and enhance positive attitudes toward alternative solutions, this activity has essentially one narrow purpose: to allow ideas to surface. For this to happen special care must be taken to avoid criticism, analysis, and discussion of ideas. The usual procedure is to first select an issue to focus on and then inform the participants of the special procedures necessary to allow ideas to be generated. The rules are sometimes posted for all to see and should include the following:

1. All ideas related to the topic in any direct way are desired.
2. A maximum number of related ideas is desired.
3. One idea may be modified or adapted and expressed as another idea.
4. Ideas should be expressed as clearly and concisely as possible.
5. No discussion and no criticism of ideas should be attempted.

Arrangements for brainstorming include a group leader for small groups or a recorder and/or an assistant leader for large groups. While only two or more people can brainstorm, this activity can be successful with groups as large as sixty or seventy provided that two or three leaders are available to receive ideas at the same time and to record them. A chalkboard, overhead projector, or large sheets of paper are useful for writing down ideas. A microphone may be used with a "man in the audience" technique to get a maximum idea flow in a minimum of time.

Some practical suggestions for conducting brainstorming sessions include:

1. Establish a time limit based on the size of the group and the issue.
2. Encourage and stimulate without being too directive.
3. Restate ideas, but also let silence prevail for up to a minute to allow for thinking time.
4. Record each idea so that all participants can refer to them during the session.
5. Let ideas flow informally with a minimum use of formal recognition of people.
6. When interest wavers, terminate the session with a brief resume to let the people see their productiveness.

Follow-up activities such as group discussions or buzz sessions should take all of the ideas and analyze, criticize, edit, revise, and suggest implementation procedures.

Finally, brainstorming should only be used on real problems and only if there is a real need for many new ideas. If the group senses that their ideas will not actually be used the brainstorming session may end in painful silence. If only two alternatives are possible brainstorming is not appropriate. But, if a fresh approach is necessary and there are no foreseeable restrictions on the possibility of a new method, go ahead and brainstorm.

- **Buzz Sessions**

In this basic, small group activity temporary groups are formed to discuss a specific topic. This activity is characterized by a maximum of critical interaction and a minimum of structure. There is relatively high experience impact because the participant is active, he contributes to the content, and he makes immediate voiced value judgments of other people's ideas. The intent of this activity is to focus on a specific topic in order to promote verbal interaction among the participants. Hopefully, interest and commitment to change will be stimulated as the groups identify various points of agreement as well as points of view which conflict.

Some of the necessary procedures include:

1. A minimum time limit of 10 to 15 minutes is necessary while an hour or more may be needed for a complex subject.
2. To facilitate feedback, recorders for each group are necessary. They should be instructed to keep their notes brief.
3. Group leaders may be appointed or may be selected by the group. The point to keep well in mind is that full discussion is encouraged, including disagreement and alternative suggestions.
4. Leaders should circulate among the buzz groups but should not participate. This allows them to get a sense of general direction and at the same time let the participants feel they are not left completely alone.
5. The ideal buzz group size is five to nine members.
6. Round tables or circles of chairs with no head position, separated enough to avoid interference between groups, are crucial points to remember.
7. Leaders normally need only to act in a general fashion but the recorders should be able to screen ideas, digest, synthesize and analyze.

8. Because buzz group participants need to be familiar with each other, name tags are useful.
9. A follow-up activity is always necessary to analyze the ideas generated. The recorder, a discussion group, or consultants should review the ideas for the participants.
10. Buzz sessions should be used only after some prior activity. Participants must be interested in the topic, have some knowledge about the topic, and have definite feelings to express.
11. Buzz sessions should not be used when opinions are not crucial in approaching the problem, or when only one solution is available. The exception to this is the situation where the intent is to get reactions to the "apparent" solution.

An example of the effective use of the buzz session activity would be in an inservice program where the objective is to get junior high school teachers to teach reading in their content areas. After the teachers receive input and agree that many students do not comprehend their textbooks very well, buzz groups could be formed to seek solutions to this problem. The follow-up activities would be to organize and analyze solutions and, hopefully, to arrive at some tentative plans.

Finally, if the buzz group activity is properly carried out based on the need for participant involvement, it can change a meeting from a passive, head-nodding, session into an active, alert, action-oriented meeting. The buzz session is easy to use and highly flexible, and it appears to be well suited to the needs of groups of teachers who need to engage in purposeful activity.

- **Group Discussion**

Small group activity usually centers on a given problem and is intended to rely on organized interaction to arrive at either a common decision or a clearly defined disagreement. The intent of group discussions includes sharing information, analyzing alternatives, developing understandings of complex problems, and arriving at carefully considered decisions. Variations of discussions include the previously mentioned buzz session, the case analysis, and the leaderless group.

The case analysis is a group discussion structured around a real situation. Many parts of a complex situation are presented in narrative form with a minimum of irrelevant information. The leader usually is in the position of stimulating the participants to interpret the significant variables of the case. Sometimes the leader already knows these variables, sometimes he does not. This factor determines to a great extent the amount of structure the leader provides. When only a few alternatives are relevant more structure is usually necessary and when a variety of alternatives are available the discussion can be much less structured.

The leaderless discussion is intended to increase the involvement of the participants. This, of course, assumes that group assumption of responsibility is more important than seeking a solution to a problem. When involvement is the primary objective, the group is informed that seeking a leader is to be discouraged. Usually a leaderless group is observed by persons who are responsible for its conception. If necessary, a skilled leader should assist the group in overcoming obstacles and withdraw to allow the participants to begin again.

It is crucial that the participants have a real interest in the problem, have a real need to discuss the topic, and have pertinent information concerning the problem. It is also necessary that the group project a plan and timetable for carrying out its purposes. Finally, some record of the outcomes of the discussion should be kept. These notes should go to each discussant prior to each subsequent session, if any. Often the purposes of the group can be accomplished without a follow-up activity. If this is not possible, follow-up activities may include a brief published report or an action research project to develop and evaluate the ideas generated by the group.

Groups must be large enough to carry out their work and small enough to allow considerable personal interaction. For this reason the optimal group size usually ranges from seven to fifteen people. It is also important to hold meetings in a quiet, comfortable setting where the participants can see each other. Sometimes it is better to let the leader be designated by his behavior rather than by a chairman position at the table.

Some limitations of group discussions are inherent in the following points:

1. Group leaders must be trained to be effective. Don't assume that the personable, eager person can always be effective.
2. Avoid letting a discussion become a recitation of questions and answers. It is better to share diverse opinions with open ended questions which stimulate a variety of responses.
3. Avoid the tendency to systematically call on each person and don't be afraid of silence. Let people feel the need to say something but also prevent some from dominating the interaction.
4. Don't organize a discussion to support what is already decided and don't involve people in a discussion of "your" problem. Most people will see through these types of manipulation and will resent wasting their time.

Finally, there is more to a group discussion than getting a group of people together. There must be a need, an objective, some careful planning, and usually some result or follow-up activity.

• Role Playing

In this activity one or more people assume roles and spontaneously act out a specified problem in an attempt to *act* and *feel* as they might in the real situation. The intent is to understand the feelings of other people and to develop skill in spontaneous verbal interaction.

The general procedure is to establish rapport, identify a situation, assign roles, adhere to the roles, and stop at the appropriate time. Because of the high intensity of involvement, it is important that the participants feel comfortable with the role. The role playing should be directed to a very specific problem and role assignments must be explicit so the participant knows what is expected of him. Leaders of this activity must caution participants to adhere to their assigned role and must terminate the *play* before involvement becomes emotionally embarrassing.

Follow-up activities must be carried out to seek reactions of both the actors and the audience. Sometimes follow-up group discussions or an expert's analysis is useful. Switching roles is also a good follow-up activity

provided additional time is spent contrasting the two situations. With small groups of ten to fifteen members, each participant can observe two actors, carry out discussions, and have a chance to role play. Larger groups may require buzz groups to carry out follow-up activities.

It is important for leaders to be sensitive to the feelings of actors. By displaying a friendly, permissive, and constructive attitude toward role players, embarrassment can be overcome.

One instance of a role playing session in a reading inservice session is when teachers act out a conference between a parent and a teacher where the teacher wishes to convince the reluctant parent that his child might benefit from a summer remedial reading program. Role playing may also be useful in situations where truly changed behavior is desired. For this reason improved reading instruction may result when teachers have opportunities to *feel* the need for a change.

• Summary

In this chapter a wide range of formats was provided to allow inservice leaders to select activities which best suit the objectives of the program. The straightforward lecture was described as an effective way to permit participants to receive information. The usefulness of viewing specific teacher and/or pupil behavior was discussed in the section on demonstrations. To meet the need to see *how they do it* the observation was described. Interviewing was presented as a way to communicate individually and in large groups. Brainstorming was offered as a useful method for generating ideas, while intense group interaction on a specific topic was discussed in the section on buzz sessions. A variety of types of group discussions were described and, finally, role playing was presented as a technique which attempts to get participants to live the real situation.

References

1. Harris, B. W., and W. Bessent. *Inservice Education: A Guide to Better Practice.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
2. Thelen, H. A. *Dynamics of Groups at Work.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954.

Chapter 5

EXAMPLES

In this chapter we present some examples of inservice programs that have actually been implemented in a variety of settings. They should be perceived as *examples,* not as inservice *models* to be implemented in other settings without regard for local considerations. And, because they are described just as they were presented, they have certain limitations with regard to the discussion in Chapter 2. Therefore, we offer them with our comments and with an invitation to each reader to consider how the programs might be modified in light of the preceding discussion and with regard for his own local needs and resources.

Inservice programs may be offered at the building level, where some or all of the teachers in a given school participate, at the district level, or at the state or regional level. Examples of programs at each of these levels are given. Each example is presented with regard for the critical factors in the inservice process identified in Chapter 2. Our comments are given parenthetically.

• Building Centered Programs

Inservice programs that focus on the needs of the teachers and staff of a specific school may come closest to dealing with grass roots concerns. At the building level one or two teachers may get together to study a problem that perplexes them, a group may decide to pursue a common interest, or the entire building staff may work toward improving the overall reading program. The whole range of options should be available at all times to permit staff members to tackle problems in the most straightforward manner possible. Two examples of interest group programs and an example of a building wide program follow. The interest group examples are adapted from Otto and Smith (*1*).

Interest Groups

EXAMPLE 1: INTEREST GROUP

NEED. Following a districtwide closed-circuit television presentation on developing students' ability to think creatively about certain reading selections, the primary grade teachers in one building requested more information on how to teach creative reading.

GOAL. To help elementary teachers be more regular and precise in teaching their pupils to think creatively about certain reading selections. (*Comment*: Note that the goal is one that was identified and stated by a reading consultant for the entire district. While this is not strictly in line

with what we have been saying about the identification of needs and statement of goals, the fact is that the preliminary activity did lead to the identification of need at the building level.)

OBJECTIVE. To help teachers improve their teaching of creative reading. (*Comment*: This is the objective as stated for the program. Note that it is *not* stated in behavioral terms. Is it possible to state a behavioral objective when the topic is *creative* reading? If not, what is to be done about evaluation?)

ACTIVITIES. A single late afternoon session was arranged with the district consultant who had been responsible for the initial television presentation. Since the television programs had been recorded on audiotape, it was possible for the teachers to listen again to the definition of creative reading and the characteristics of questions designed to stimulate thinking at the cognitive level of creativity. In addition, the written reactions to the television programs submitted by teachers throughout the school system had been used to construct questions for teachers to ask of themselves.

1. Do your good readers often have their hands raised before you finish asking your question about a story? It was apparent from the television demonstration that the participating students frequently raised their hands to answer a question before it was completely asked. Information received from teachers who viewed the programs indicated that this is typical behavior of good readers. Premature hand raising suggests that students are conditioned to expect questions about their reading that do not require higher-level thinking.
2. Do your students understand how to adjust their thinking when you change the cognitive level of your questions about a story? It was observed during the TV programs that the demonstrating teacher had to clarify precisely the limits of the response being solicited before the students took advantage of the freedom available to them. The students tested the limits to which they might go with their answers. As the teacher reacted to their responses, they learned the rules for working at the cognitive level of creativity.
3. Do you experience feelings of discomfort when your questions about a story are followed by silence? A number of teachers who responded to the television programs commented on the lack of time available for teaching creative reading. Teachers who have a positive attitude toward teaching creative thinking will not be uncomfortable about taking the time necessary to permit students to answer high-level questions about their reading.
4. Do you find yourself answering some of the *best* questions you ask about a story? When teachers do ask questions that call for creative thinking, they often wait too short a time for students to do effective thinking before answering the questions themselves. Students become used to this pattern and wait for the teacher to answer *hard* questions.
5. Do you feel a twinge of conscience if you don't tell a student that his response to a question about a story is either right or wrong? Teachers are accustomed to rewarding correct responses and withholding rewards for incorrect responses. It was noticeable in the television programs that the demonstrating teacher had difficulty finding language patterns that

accepted students' responses without evaluating them as correct or incorrect. Teachers who teach creative reading effectively are likely to have a ready supply of accepting but nonevaluating responses.

EVALUATION. The questions and the audiotape were left with the teachers to improve their teaching of reading. (*Comment*: Could anything more have been done by way of evaluation? Remember, there was no behavioral objective.)

EXAMPLE 2: INTEREST GROUP

NEED. All of the secondary school teachers in the district were invited to take a course on how to improve their reading ability. Nineteen people enrolled in the classes which were designed to improve their vocabulary, rate, and comprehension.

GOAL. No overall goal was stated.

OBJECTIVE. To help secondary school teachers develop positive attitudes toward incorporating the teaching of reading into their content area classes and to teach them specific instructional practices to use with their students. (*Comment*: Note that neither the need nor the objective is stated in terms of the participants' perceptions. The program described here was instigated by the district reading consultant to accomplish a secondary purpose: to change the participants attitudes by working with them on improving their personal reading skills.)

ACTIVITIES. A personal reading improvement course of seven two-hour sessions was used to achieve the objective. It was hoped that the participating teachers would inductively learn some techniques to employ with their own students and would develop positive attitudes toward incorporating these techniques into their teaching. The inductive approach was adopted to avoid the negative attitudes that sometimes result whan a specialist tells teachers how they should teach.

EVALUATION. In addition to improving reading rate and comprehension, a survey questionnaire indicated that this particular inservice approach had desirable effects on attitudes and teaching. On the questionnaire, thirteen of the nineteen subjects responded that because of the course they felt more able to improve their students' reading; eleven said that they were more willing to make reading instruction a part of their classes; and seven commented that they were already teaching their students some reading improvement techniques they had learned in the course.

Buildingwide Program

EXAMPLE 3: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The inservice program described here was devised to meet the contractual agreement for a reading development course between a school board and the local teachers' organization. The clause in the contract was stated as follows:

> A joint committee of three members appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and three by the President of the Association is

created to study and establish a course or courses in reading development for all District teachers and administrators. All District teachers and administrators shall be required to take this course within a four year period following January 1972 unless such a course is in evidence on their credit transcript no earlier than 1967.

The particular program that is described was carried out in one middle school building (Grades 5-8).

NEED. The general need for improved reading instruction was underscored by the negotiated contract. The specific need in the present instance was to translate the contractual clause into a worthwhile inservice program for the building.

GOAL. As translated, the goal was to establish a viable reading program for the middle school.

OBJECTIVES

1. Teachers will define a reading program to fit the needs of the middle school philosophy.
2. Teachers will participate in study, group work, and discussion in discovering the processes of reading suggested by reading authorities today.
3. Teachers will establish a sequential skill list as a basis for individual assessment.
4. Teachers will develop a profile for individual assessment and progress to follow the child through middle school.
5. Teachers will write objectives for using the reading skills across content areas.
6. Teachers will index reading materials that meet the needs of individual students.
7. Teachers will show how reading is related to the communications process.
8. Teachers will plan a program that is individualized.
9. Teachers will write terminal goals for middle school students.
10. Teachers will complete a reading program to meet our needs at the middle school.

ACTIVITIES. A series of weekly, after-school sessions was held. Six major topics provided a focus for the sessions; multiple sessions were devoted, as needed, to each topic. The topics were: 1) the reading process, 2) reading in the content areas, 3) reading in the communication process, 4) skills essential to successful reading performance in the middle school, 5) individualizing the teaching of reading, and 6) an overall reading program for the middle school. For each topic, relevant resource materials and/or people were identified, related objectives were stated, and performance criteria were established. Background information was gained mainly via presentations and discussion led by resource people and work study sessions with subsequent sharing among the subgroups. Participants spent much of their time in work type activities – e.g., identifying essential reading skills, writing behavioral objectives, devising plans for individualizing instruction – working individually, in small groups, or, when the time came to put it all together, as a total group.

EVALUATION. The total program was evaluated in terms of the following objectives:

1. Teachers will write lesson plans using skills, games, strategies, and techniques discussed in the reading inservice.
2. Teachers will discuss reading in relation to the communication process.
3. Students will be involved in programs that start where they are and meeting their individual needs.
4. When a teacher is observed presenting a reading lesson she will be preparing students for the lesson they will be working on.
5. There will be a continuous growth in student use of supplementary materials.
6. Students will check out more books for recreational reading.
7. In a random sampling of students concerning their feelings about reading there should be a noticeable improvement in positive attitudes toward reading.

(*Comment*: Look back at the clause in the contract and decide whether the inservice program described meets the spirit of the requirement. If you think it does not, what would you change?)

• Districtwide Programs

Certain types of inservice programs can be handled with the greatest effect and efficiency if they are offered on a districtwide basis. Programs aimed specifically at principals, for example, would necessarily involve representatives from a number of school buildings. Other examples would be programs designed to meet the unique needs of staff members in a particular attendance area within the district (dealing with the language development problems of certain cultural or economic groups), to bring together the teachers in a given content area (teaching the requisite reading skills in the context of a secondary social studies class) or at a given age/grade level (coping with children who have difficulty in making the transition from kindergarten to first grade), or to prepare personnel for the implementation of a new approach to instruction (an objective-based approach to reading skill development). Again, the entire range of options should be available so that programs can be devised to meet unique needs as they are identified. Examples or programs designed to meet the needs of a special interest group, of the teachers at a given level, and of the personnel about to be involved in implementing new programs follow. Examples 4 and 5 are adapted from Otto and Smith (*1*).

Special Interest Groups

EXAMPLE 4: PROGRAM FOR PRINCIPALS

NEED. A survey (conducted by the reading coordinator for the district) of elementary school principals in the district disclosed that the principals felt they were not adequately prepared to administer the reading program for the primary grades. They responded favorably to an invitation to attend five two-hour classes entitled "Administering the Primary Grades Reading Program" and taught by two central office reading consultants.

GOAL. No overall goal was stated. (*Comment*: In practice, even well conceived and carefully planned inservice programs that are designed for a specific purpose may not be related to a long range, overall goal. Is this a serious flaw? How could the practice best be changed?)

OBJECTIVE. To help principals administer the primary grades reading program in their schools.

ACTIVITIES. The classes were held twice a week in a central location from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. They were held early in May when the principals were hiring teachers, planning their instructional programs, and ordering materials for the following school year.

The first meeting was devoted to a consideration of the following organizational plans for teaching reading: three groups in one heterogenious classroom taught by the homeroom teacher; completely individualized teaching; team teaching; homogeneous grouping for reading within one grade; homogeneous grouping for reading between two or among three grades. The principals were given handouts with diagrams and explanations of the various schemes and asked to list the advantages and disadvantages of each. After their deliberations, the principals were divided into two small groups for discussion.

The second meeting was devoted to different theoretical approaches to beginning reading instruction. The following approaches were considered: phonics, linguistics, basal approach, modified alphabets, language experience, and programed approach. Again the principals were handed explanations and asked to list advantages and disadvantages of each approach. Small group discussion followed.

The third, fourth, and fifth meetings provided the principals with information about evaluating the total reading program, evaluating a teacher's performance in the classroom, and using financial resources and specialized personnel. All meetings began with a short presentation by one of the instructors and included plenty of time for questions and discussion.

EVALUATION. No formal evaluation was done. (*Comment*: The open discussion type format was employed in each session. Do you think a formal evaluation was needed?)

EXAMPLE 5: PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS

NEED. A new junior primary program to provide a transition grade between kindergarten and first grade was instituted for students who lack readiness for reading instruction. The teachers involved expressed their need for some readiness training before the new program was put into operation.

GOAL. To help teachers understand basic differences between the junior primary program, the kindergarten program, and the first grade program.

OBJECTIVE. To help teachers understand the objectives of the program in regard to reading instruction.

ACTIVITIES. All the teachers in the school system who taught junior primary classes were released from their teaching responsibilities for two full days to meet with central office coordinators of mathematics, science,

social studies, and reading. The final two and one-half hours were devoted to a group discussion between the reading coordinator and the teachers.

As a follow-up procedure the reading coordinator sent a memo to each of the teachers several days after they returned to their classes. He had used this technique following other inservice meetings and found it effective in summing up group discussions and reminding teachers of the plans that were made during meetings. If carefully written, a follow-up memo often communicates ideas more precisely and more clearly than they are communicated in oral discussion. The oral summing up at the end of a spirited two-and-one-half hour meeting is often done imprecisely and at a time when fatigue is interfering with concentration.

The following paragraphs are excerpts from the two page memo each junior primary teacher received when she returned to her classroom after two days of inservice meetings:

To: All junior primary teachers

From: (name), Reading Coordinator

The recent inservice meeting we shared was a good learning experience for me. The group discussion brought to my awareness the many fine things being accomplished in our junior primary classes as well as some of the administrative and instructional problems that accompany the program.

I think all agree that the junior primary program is needed by many children who have completed kindergarten, but who seem to be lacking in readiness for a structured reading program. These students apparently fall into two categories: those with serious and complex readiness deficits and those with relatively minor readiness deficits. The question seems to be for which of these students junior primary classes are most needed or perhaps whether or not one junior primary class should service the readiness needs of students from both categories. How a particular school answers this question seems important not so much in terms of whether or not certain students will benefit – it seems obvious that students in either category will profit from the special advantages the program offers – but rather in terms of the expectancies of parents and future teachers regarding the junior primary graduate's ability to read. The need for precise communication regarding the kind or kinds of students a particular junior primary program services is important. The instructional program and our evaluation of the effects of the instructional program must consider the seriousness of the student's disability when he enters the program.

Unfortunately, our present methods of predicting the advent of reading readiness in a given child are not as reliable as we would like. Some children who are judged to have serious readiness deficits may prove to be less seriously deficient. In these cases, the junior primary teacher should begin in the instructional reading process when the child evidences readiness, or in rare cases the child may be transferred to a first grade class.

However, I believe that junior primary teachers should not feel that getting all of the children – or any of their children if they teach the seriously deficient – started in a formal reading program is their responsibility. The junior primary program, I feel, should be a 38 weeks language readiness program, not an instructional reading

program that begins in February, instead of September. It is true that given the conditions present in most junior primary classes some children who would not respond to formal instruction in a first grade class can be taught to respond to print. These responses, however, may be short lived and unproductive of the thinking processes that engage a person who is a mature reader.

There is evidence that reading ability correlates positively and highly to general language ability. It would seem that the sole function of the junior primary program might be to provide children who have speaking and listening deficiencies with many and varied speaking and listening experiences. Motor coordination development might also be an appropriate objective for some children. Getting a child started in a reading program should be an objective that may or may not emerge as the junior primary program progresses.

Rhythm and rhyming games, creative dramatics, listening to and telling stores, talking about shared experiences, music, and art work are representative of activities that may be varied and presented at different levels of sophistication for an entire school year without boring most children and without formal reading instruction. If these activities are presented correctly, children may inductively learn much about reading that will in the long run serve them better than some formal experiences with decoding the language.

It was apparent during our inservice discussion that opinions and procedures regarding the role of reading instruction in the junior primary program vary. This is consistent with our philosophy that every school should have the kind of instructional program it needs. It was also apparent that the nature and objectives of each school's program need to be communicated to that school's entire faculty and to parents whose children are in the program.

The ideas stated in this memo are certainly subject to discussion and argument. They are ideas which I formed during our first meeting. Perhaps they could serve as a base for discussion at future inservice meetings.

EVALUATION. No formal evaluation was done. (*Comment*: What might have been done? How might the objective been stated better to facilitate evaluation?

New Programs

EXAMPLE 6: TEACHER AIDE PROGRAM

NEED. The district was instituting a new teacher aide program, which involved providing aides for primary teachers to assist particularly with the teaching of beginning reading. The teachers involved and the newly selected aides requested a program to help them come to grips with their new roles and responsibilities.

GOAL. To improve the teaching of beginning reading.

OBJECTIVE. To introduce newly appointed teacher aides to the concepts and techniques of beginning reading instruction. (*Comment*: Note that a specific objective *could* be stated for each of the five two-hour sessions described next.)

ACTIVITIES. The following is the proposal for the inservice program that was offered.

PROPOSED INSERVICE PROGRAM

General Texts

1. Ekwall, Eldon E. *Locating and Correcting Reading Difficulties.* Columbus, Ohio: Chas. E. Merrill, 1970.
2. Rauch, Sidney J. *Handbook for the Volunteer Tutor.* Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1969.

Session #1 A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO READING AND READING INSTRUCTION

If a teacher aide is to function effectively and harmoniously in assisting her teacher-supervisor, they must both share the same overall mental model of the reading process. This opening session will be devoted to a) offering alternative definitions of reading; b) presenting briefly the four major approaches to the teaching of reading that have arisen out of these varying definitions; and then c) comparing and contrasting the four in terms of the underlying rationale of each, the organizational and curricular patterns implicit in each, and the instructional, enrichment, and evaluatory procedures consistent with each. Sample instructional materials representative of each approach will be shown and demonstrated, and a summary examination will be administered, corrected, and discussed.

Suggested Follow-Up Readings

1. Kerfoot, James F. (Ed.). *First Grade Reading Programs.* Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1965.
2. Spache, George D., and Evelyn B. Spache. *Reading in the Elementary School* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969, Chapters 1, 3,4,5,6.

Session #2 THE TEACHING OF WORD RECOGNITION AND WORD COMPREHENSION SKILLS.

This session will deal with reading at the "word" level: the building of sight vocabulary, the teaching and reinforcement of word-attack skills, and the role of decoding skills in reading generally. Various "essential" word lists will be presented, compared, and discussed. In particular, the usefulness of the Dolch and Fry lists, both instructionally and as diagnostic tools, will be stressed. Next, the various contextual clues and phonic "rules" used by more advanced primary readers will be presented and demonstrated. The emphasis throughout this section will be upon reading – even at the word level – as a *thinking* process. As in Session #1, a summary quiz – corrected and discussed immediately afterwards – will culminate the session.

Suggested Follow-up Readings

1. Gray, William S. *On Their Own In Reading* (rev. ed.). Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1960.
2. Wallen, Carl J. *Word Attack Skills in Reading.* Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1969.
3. Wilson, Robert M., and Maryanne Hall. *Programmed Word Attack for Teachers.* Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1968.

Session #3 READING AS THINKING: TEACHING THE COMPREHENSION SKILLS.

This session will be divided into two major parts: 1) the identification of the major comprehension skills in reading, and 2) specific ways for promoting and enhancing them.

During part one, various lists of skills drawn together by reading "authorities" will be presented and discussed, with relative "priorities," or "timetables," developed for their attainment by young readers. During part two, the crucial role of questioning will be discussed, with Bloom's and Sanders' taxonomies presented as possible models.

Both *oral* questioning and the creating of *written* questions for study guides and lesson activities will be covered. As an application level activity, the participants will be divided into small groups, given representative sample instructional material, and charged with the creating of questions appropriate to both situations.

Suggested Follow-up Readings

1. Spache, George D., and Evelyn B. Spache. *Reading in the Elementary School* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969, Chapters 9, 13, 14.
2. Stauffer, Russell G. *Teaching Reading as a Thinking Process.* New York: Harper and Row, 1969, Chapters 2,3,4.

Session #4 DIAGNOSTIC, CORRECTIVE, AND REMEDIAL TECHNIQUES IN READING

This session, too, will have two parts: a "theory" section, and a "practice" period. Part one will consist of a lecture-discussion period – pitched at a *general* level – dealing with the overall major causes of reading retardation in young readers and how these problems can best be avoided or mitigated. Part two will focus upon specific, concrete diagnostic and remedial tools and techniques available to the classroom teacher or teacher-aide. Among these will be the Quick Test of IQ, the Dolch Word List Test, the Gilmore Oral Reading Test, and the Informal Reading Inventory. The session will conclude with a practice-period during which participants will record, analyze, and interpret a young reader's taped oral reading.

Suggested Follow-up Readings

1. Johnson, Marjorie S., and Roy A. Kress. *Informal Reading Inventories.* Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1965.
2. Otto, Wayne, and Richard A. McMenemy. *Corrective and Remedial Teaching.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12.
3. Zintz, Miles. *Corrective Reading.* Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1966.

Session #5 SUMMARY SESSION: MEETING THE NEEDS OF *ALL* READERS.

This final session will attempt to draw together what has been covered so far and at least touch upon any areas not yet dealt with: meeting the needs of the better reader with particularly high poten-

tial, the selection of teaching-learning materials appropriate to all levels of readers, and the problems of articulating reading instruction with the content areas of the elementary-school curriculum. An open-ended kind of format will hopefully prevail during this session, with participants here able to voice questions, problems, and feelings generated throughout the series.

EVALUATION. A paper-and-pencil examination and a course evaluation sheet was given to each participant. The examination was checked and discussed at the final session. Note, too, that some type of evaluation was proposed for each session.

EXAMPLE 7: EXTENSION COURSE

NEED. District administrators, with input from consultants and representative teachers, decided to adapt an objective based approach to the teaching of reading in all the elementary schools in the district. Because the approach requires an understanding of behavioral objectives, criterion referenced testing, the concept of accountability, record keeping, and techniques for focusing instruction, a request for a course designed to deal with these topics was directed to the Extension Division of a nearby university.

GOAL. To improve the teaching of reading in the elementary schools of the district.

OBJECTIVE. The general objective was: To acquaint staff members (teachers, aides, principals, and local curriculum consultants) with the basic concepts required to implement an objective based approach to reading skill development. (*Comment*: Again, note that one or more specific behavioral objectives *could* have been stated for each weekly session.)

ACTIVITIES. A course entitled "Workshop in School Program Development: Objective Based Reading Instruction" was arranged through Extension. The course carried three hours of university credit and it was staffed by a professor and five project staff members from the university. The content of the course was planned in collaboration with representatives from the school district and the six university people assumed responsibility for instruction and leadership on the basis of their particular expertise. Thirteen three-hour sessions were scheduled. The weekly meetings were held in the early evening. Thirty-nine persons from throughout the district enrolled in the course, and there was at least one representative from each elementary school building.

The following topics provided a focus for the thirteen sessions:

Session 1. Organization of the workshop; overview of an objective based approach to reading skill development.

Session 2. Behavioral objectives, their nature and function.

Session 3. Assessment: criterion referenced tests and techniques for criterion referenced testing.

Sessions 4 and 5. Word attack skills: specific objectives, record keeping, organizing for instruction.

Session 6. Focusing instruction in an objective based program: diagnosis, continuous progress, grouping, scheduling.
Session 7. The overall developmental reading program. (The purpose here was to show how the objective based skill development program complements the total developmental reading program.)
Sessions 8 and 9. Study skills: specific objectives, record keeping, organizing for instruction.
Sessions 10 and 11. Comprehension skills: specific objectives, record keeping, organizing for instruction.
Session 12. Self-directed, interpretive, and creative reading: expressive or "open" objectives, record keeping, organizing for instruction.
Session 13. Discussion, summary, and evaluation of the workshop.

During each session there was time for basic informational input from the instructor for the session and follow-up activities as needed. Participants had opportunities to identify essential skills, to state related behavioral objectives, to identify instructional activities and materials related to the objectives, and to work through the specifics of implementing the objective based approach.

EVALUATION. Plans were made for the local reading consultant to do an analysis and evaluation of the implementation effort during and after the first year's operation of the program.

• State and Regional Programs

The Right to Read campaign of the 1970's has given much impetus to efforts to improve reading instruction at the state level. Plans have been developed in several states to provide leadership, coordination, and resources at the state level for a wide variety of inservice activities ranging from volunteer tutor programs to programs for teachers who deal with children with severe learning disabilities. While the specifics of such efforts may not differ significantly from what is done at the district level, the fact is that when efforts are pooled and coordinated additional budgetary and other resources may be made available to meet persistent and, in some instances, very specialized inservice needs. Needless to say, everything we have said about planning and carrying out inservice programs applies at this level. In fact the identification of needs and the focusing of activities ought to be done with special care because of the additional distance between the grass roots participants and the planners. Too many well funded state wide efforts have been dissipated when the programs offered miss the target groups for whom they are intended.

Most of the same comments can be made about regional programs. The main reason for offering programs on a regional basis is that by pooling money and talent better programs can be offered. The point to be made here is that local school people ought to be aware of whatever regional mechanisms exist either within or across states because they can help to expidite local inservice efforts. In Wisconsin, for example, the Cooperative Education Service Agencies each serve several counties. In Texas, education service centers serve different regions of the state. Many comparable public and private agencies exist. They are a resource that ought to be considered when inservice efforts are planned.

At the national level, the inservice activities associated with the product dissemination efforts of research and development centers and educational laboratories are good examples of inservice efforts on a large scale. Educational products – materials for teaching reading, systems for assessment – are being offered by various public and private laboratories and centers in increasing numbers. The successful implementation of these products at the local level requires substantial inservice input. The labs and centers are beginning to tackle the staff development job with reasonable success. Local school people ought to make it a point to become aware of such offerings and to participate when appropriate.

Reference

1. Otto, Wayne, and Richard J. Smith. *Administering the School Reading Program.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970.

CURRENT TITLES IN THE READING AIDS SERIES

Informal Reading Inventories
Johnson and Kress

Reading for Children Without – Our Disadvantaged Youth
Whipple and Black

Critical Reading Develops Early
Lee, Bingham, and Woelfel

Teaching Critical Reading at the Primary Level
Stauffer and Cramer

Guidance and the Teaching of Reading
Ruth Strang

Tests of Reading Readiness and Achievement
Farr and Anastasiow

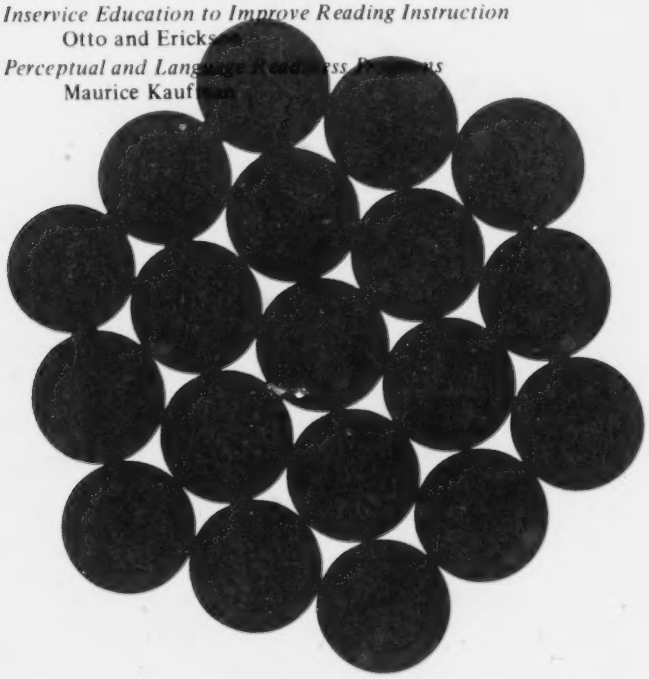
How to Read a Book
Sargent, Huus, and Andresen

Teaching Reading Skills Through the Newspaper
Arnold B. Cheyney

Reading Tests for the Secondary Grades
Blanton, Farr, and Tuinman

Inservice Education to Improve Reading Instruction
Otto and Erick[illegible]

Perceptual and Lang[illegible]ess [illegible]
Maurice Kauf[illegible]



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